

## Why I'm Spiritually Dry, Part 2 - Romans 14:5-9 – May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013

- Today's teaching will be part two of a series I've titled; "Why I'm Spiritually Dry."
- Here in the fourteenth chapter of Romans, the Apostle Paul has been putting his finger on several ways that we can become spiritually dry.
- This because, there were apparently some major issues within the church there in Rome, such that they warranted Paul addressing them.

- I believe that the common denominator in all the issues that Paul addresses is that they all lead to spiritual dryness in the life of a believer.
- The reason they all lead to spiritual dryness is that they drain us of our love, one for another, and they kill our joy, in our love for the Lord.
- By way of both a review and introduction, I'd like to begin with the first one we looked at last week found in verses one and two; "legalism."

### 1. Legalism (Verses 1-2)

- Here Paul says to accept those weak in faith without passing judgment on the disputable matters such as eating meat or only vegetables.

### 2. Judgmentalism (Verses 3-4)

- Paul says not to look down on one other, as you then judge another's servant, when God accepts both, in that He is able to make us stand.

### 3. Denominationalism (Verses 5-9)

- v5-6 Paul says be convinced in our mind regarding which day we worship on or from what types of foods we abstain from, in thanks to God.
- v7-8 He says none of us lives or dies to himself, rather, we live and die to the Lord, because whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.
- v9 Paul goes on to explain it was for this very reason that Christ died and rose again so that He might be the Lord of both dead and living.

- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a bit as I attempt to expound on what it is that the Holy Spirit wants us to see in what Paul is writing here.
- By the way, you'll be happy to know that I won't be using TV as an illustration as I did last week, to my own peril given the comments I had.
- Be that as it may, instead of using the illustration of what we watch I'll be using the illustration of how we worship, and the way we worship.

- Let me explain we're all keenly aware of the numerous variety of churches and denominations with their worship styles being very different.
- So much so, we've created labels such as denominational or non-denominational, high church or low church, along with a variety of others.
- Typically, the denominational church known more as the high church is more formal in the style of their worship, and the type of their attire.

- Conversely, the non-denominational church known more as the low church is more informal in the style of worship and type of their attire.
- The problem isn't that we have vastly different styles of worship the problem is in the division these different styles of worship have caused.
- One of the reasons that I, as a pastor, chose the Calvary Chapel affiliation over some other church denomination is because of the division.

In one of our Calvary Chapel statements of what we believe, it says; "We are not a denominational church, nor are we opposed to denominations as such, only their over-emphasis of the doctrinal differences that have led to the division of the Body of Christ."

- Be that as it may, I believe it was for this very reason Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to address these divisions in the Body of Christ.
- It's interesting to note his emphasis isn't on the many differences concerning these "disputable matters," rather it's the division it leads to.
- In other words, it's not which day we worship on, nor is what foods we abstain from rather, it's the divisions that these differences create.

- I would suggest that the litmus test is not the different styles of our worship, nor is it the different days that we worship, if it's unto the Lord.
- One will worship on the Jewish Sabbath, as this SDA church that we have the privilege to meet in does, and others will worship on Sunday.
- However, we get into trouble in the body of Christ, when we create these divisions and denominations in our legalism and Judgmentalism.

Charles Spurgeon - "Some kept the Jewish festivals and some did not. ...No true Christian lives to himself, and therefore as he lives to God we have no right to judge his course of action. ...The very design of our Lord's work is to make us live unto Him and not as the servants of our fellow men; we are therefore very wrong when we attempt to make our brethren the servants of our opinions and ideas. Let us leave them to serve the Lord as their consciences teach them."

**Colossians 2:16-17 NIV** Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. (17) These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

As one commentator so aptly expressed it, "We can learn from, be enriched by, and rejoice with those who are contemplative in their piety, as well as from those who are carefree in their joviality. What great latitude the Lord has given us, and those sitting next to us, in our relationship with Him. For whether we live it up *in* the Lord or give it up *for* the Lord, we can glorify Him."

- Here's the bottom line, if I live my Christian life in such a fashion that I'm guilty of creating these kinds of divisions, it's just a matter of time.
- In no time, I will dry up, instead of living it up in the Lord, because of what I've given up for the Lord, such that it's not pleasing to the Lord.
- Could it be this is the reason many church denominations are so dry? They're not only drying up, they're dying down in their divisiveness.

I'll close with a humorous story that Dave Hunt, of all people, whose now with the Lord, had shared with me years ago when I had the privilege of spending time with him when he spoke at my church on the mainland. It goes like this; I was walking across a bridge one day, and I saw a man standing on the edge, about to jump. I ran over and said: "Stop. Don't do it." "Why shouldn't I?" he asked. "Well, there's so much to live for!" "Like what?" "Are you religious?" He said: "Yes." I said: "Me too. Are you Christian or Buddhist?" "Christian." "Me too. Are you Catholic or Protestant?" "Protestant." "Me too. Are you Episcopalian or Baptist?" "Baptist." "Wow. Me too. Are you Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord?" "Baptist Church of God." "Me too. Are you original Baptist Church of God, or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God?" "Reformed Baptist Church of God." "Me too. Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1879, or Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1915?" He said: "Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1915." I said: "Die, heretic scum," and pushed him off.